

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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E.O. 11652: GDS, 12-31-81

TAGS: PFOR, NATO

SUBJ: NOVEMBER 14 NAC AGENDA ITEM I: SYG'S COMMENTS ON NPG MEETING

1. IN REMARKS TO NAC NOVEMBER 14, SYG LUNS SOUGHT TO SHARE SOME OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE'S COMMENTS AT THE NPG MINISTERIAL MEETING WITH THOSE ALLIES NOT PRESENT AT THE HAGUE SESSION. LUNS STATED HIS CONTINUING CONCERN ABOUT THE "FRIGHTENING NUCLEAR BALANCE." HE SAID THE SECDEF'S STRATEGIC BRIEFING HAD LEFT HIM IMPRESSED WITH THE THROW-WEIGHT AND NUMBERS OF SOVIET MISSILES.

2. LUNS TOLD THE COUNCIL THAT IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION FROM CANADIAN PERMREP MENZIES AT THE HAGUE, SECDEF HAD INFORMED THE ALLIES THAT THE U.S. ALERT CALLED ON OCTOBER 24 WAS IN RESPONSE TO A SOVIET THREAT TO UNILATERALLY INTRODUCE THEIR FORCES INTO THE MIDDLE EAST. THERE WAS ALSO FEAR OF THE INTRODUCTION OF SOVIET SCUD SURFACE-TO-SURFACE MISSILES, POSSIBLY WITH NUCLEAR WARHEADS, WHOSE TWO HUNDRED MILE RANGE WOULD PLACE ALL OF ISRAEL UNDER THREAT OF MISSILE ATTACK. FLEET CONCENTRATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN (NINETY-SIX SHIPS AT THE HIGH POINT) AND THE SUDDEN CUTOFF OF THE SOVIET AIRLIFT TO THE ARABS PROMPTED CONCERN THAT THE SOVIETS MIGHT BE INTENDING TO USE THIS AIRLIFT CAPABILITY TO MOVE THEIR OWN FORCES INTO
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THE AREA. GIVEN U.S.-SOVIET DIFFERENCES OVER THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE DEVELOPMENT CITED ABOVE, SAID LUNS, IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT THE U.S. HAD TO WARN MOSCOW.

3. CONCERNING U.S. CONSULTATION WITH NATO ABOUT THE ALERT, LUNS SAID THAT SECRETARY SCHLESINGER HAD POINTED OUT THAT THE TIME REQUIRED DURING THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS FOR SOVIET MISSILES TO BECOME OPERATIONAL (THREE TO FOUR WEEKS) PERMITTED ACHESON TO UNDERTAKE CONSULTATIONS WITH THE ALLIANCE. SUCH TIME WAS SIMPLY NOT AVAILABLE DURING THE RECENT MIDDLE EAST CRISIS.

4. LUNS SAID THAT ASSISTANT SECRETARY SISCO HAD REFERRED IN HIS MORNING BRIEFING OF THE NAC TO WASHINGTON'S AUTHORIZATION TO SACEUR TO INFORM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE NATO MILITARY COMMITTEE, GENERAL STEINHOFF, OF THE ALERT. BUT, SAID LUNS, SISCO HAD RECOGNIZED THAT CONSULTATION WAS STILL INSUFFICIENT, PARTICULARLY SINCE U.S. FORCES STATIONED IN EUROPE WERE PLACED ON ALERT.

5. LUNS SAID EVERYONE AT THE HAGUE DREW THE IMPRESSION FROM SCHLESINGER'S REMARKS THAT THE U.S. HAD HAD TO ACT RAPIDLY AND INDEED SHOULD HAVE DONE WHAT IT DID.

6. WHILE BOTH SECDEF AND SYG RECOGNIZED THAT THE NPG WAS NOT THE PROPER FORUM FOR DISCUSSION OF THE MIDDLE EAST, THE HAGUE SESSION DID PERMIT THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY FOR A HIGH-LEVEL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON THE SUBJECT IN THE ALLIANCE AND LUNS EXPRESSED THE COUNCIL'S APPRECIATION FOR IT. MCAULIFFE

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